



Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: November 13, 2019

Time: 7:15 PM – 9:15 PM

Location: 730 Massachusetts Avenue, Town Hall Annex, 2nd Floor Conference Room

Minutes

Members in Attendance: Daniel Amstutz, Aravind Basavapathruni, Ky Bertoli, Bill Copithorne, Lenard Diggins, Chuck Giroux, Michael Gordon, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Tycho Nightingale, Scott Smith, Laura Swan.

Members Missing: Howard Muise, Corey Rateau.

Members of the Public: Cheryl Vossler, Griffin Kantz.

1. Public Comments.

Cheryl Vossler expressed her concern that there are 18 streetlights out on Dundee Road, many of which are at crosswalks. She also noted that there are number of streetlights out along Mass. Ave., including in front of the Sunrise building. There are also a number of streetlights that are not working on Park Ave. extension and on Park Ave., and in other locations throughout Arlington Heights.

Vossler noted asked if the pedestrian phase at Mass. Ave. and Park Ave. could be extended by 5 seconds, which would help if cars run red lights at the intersection.

Vossler asked why the southbound approach on Park Ave. has two lanes, while the northbound continuation on Park Ave. has a single lane. She suggested that the left lane should be restricted to left turns. Jeff Maxtutis noted that this could impact queuing, which could extend to or beyond Downing Square.

Griffin Kantz came as a representative of a MIT team looking at the Broadway Corridor between the Alewife Brook Parkway and Rawson Road, and noted that they are synthesizing potential improvements over a 20-30 year timeframe. Kantz asked that any concerns related to the corridor and suggestions for improvements be shared with him. Kantz noted the team decided to include side streets as well to better capture

pedestrian concerns. Lenard Diggins noted that a marijuana dispensary going into the area may create additional traffic, drawing from Somerville and other nearby areas.

Kantz noted that the team has collected bike data from Strava and Lime, and has found that bike use on the corridor is similar to Mass. Ave. and the Minuteman Bikeway, even though it does not have bicycle infrastructure. The team will be developing a draft report in early December, and can continue working on the project into January. Daniel Amstutz offered to be a liaison to solicit ideas and suggestions.

2. Administration.

Maxtutis introduced Laura Swan as the new School Committee representative.

TAC members approved the minutes of October 9.

Maxtutis noted correspondence regarding Wellesley Road that will be discussed later in the meeting.

Maxtutis distributed the individual action list and active projects list.

Amstutz noted that the Town Manager's office has blocked off the room for the second Wednesday of each month in 2020, from 7:15-10:00, and asked for the dates to be added to next month's agenda.

3. Town Issues/Activities (not already on agenda).

Bill Copithorne reviewed Wayne Chouinard's memorandum describing ongoing work. The Mystic Street bridge requires additional utility design coordination before DPW puts it out to bid. Copithorne noted that the bid advertising is in progress for the Lake St/Minuteman Bikeway intersection, with construction planned in Summer 2020. Road, curb, and walk work is closing for the season. The Mass. Ave. pavement marking contract was awarded and has been completed for portions of the work. The Appleton/Wollaston/Virginia intersection has been narrowed, although DPW has received complaints from residents who are concerned that there is not enough room for turns. The residents will be meeting with the Town Manager in the next few weeks to discuss the topic. Signage has also been added to the intersection.

Daniel Amstutz noted that most of the bus lane is in place, but it required some special order items that will likely be installed this week. The Town has monitored the bus lane over the last few weeks, with an officer keeping people from parking in the bus lane. Between Lafayette St and Boulevard Road, a number of drivers have been using the bus lane to get to the right turn lane. People also cut through the neighborhood to

get to Mass Ave., so APD have added signage to reduce cut-through traffic on Lafayette St. and Boulevard St.

Amstutz said that the Town received four proposals for the Sustainable Transportation Plan Advisory Committee. The Town is currently in the process of review for the proposals. The project is still scheduled to start in January.

Amstutz has a few small edits to finalize the Bicycle Parking Guidelines for the Town, and then will post it to the Town website. MAPC released Lime bike data, and Arlington was among the top four towns in both the volume of trips and trips per capita.

Amstutz updated that the Town is applying to do a study of the Minuteman Bikeway, to understand how it can be improved for access, usability of different modes, addressing conflicts between different modes, understanding how placemaking and public art fit in, and other topics. Amstutz noted that he will be collecting letters of support.

Amstutz noted the Town will be moving the MBTA Route 87 layover to be in front of Playtime. The MBTA is taking public feedback regarding the change. The Town will also be reconstructing some of the sidewalks in Arlington Center next year, which would address sidewalk accessibility issues. Smith asked if the location in front of American Alarm was considered for layover. Amstutz responded that the Fire Department was concerned about trucks turning out of the garage. Smith also suggested that the Town look at the signal timing on Broadway and Franklin St.

Maxtutis asked Amstutz if the Town has any updates on the Mugar site. Amstutz noted that the Planning Department will follow up on this later in the year.

4. Update: Appleton Street at Park Ave.

Maxtutis noted that a resident in attendance was looking for an update on the project. Maxtutis said that the Town did a count to see if the intersection would meet a signal warrant. The intersection met several of the applicable warrants. TAC will also be collecting turning movement counts to better understand potential improvements at the intersection. Maxtutis stated that TAC will be looking at potential short and long term improvements. The resident asked if TAC had considered making Appleton a one-way street. Maxtutis said that TAC will take a look at that.

5. Discussion: TAC Social.

Maxtutis gave background on the TAC Social. He asked if January would be a good time to hold the TAC Social, and TAC supported that.

6. Update/Discussion: Parking and Traffic Direction on Bartlett Avenue.

Amstutz met with residents to discuss the request to look at potential parking restrictions or one-way direction restrictions. Amstutz suggested adding pockets of parking restrictions that would allow drivers to pull over to pass, particularly in the approximately 200 foot segment to the west of the Whole Foods driveway. Amstutz estimated that this approach could result in a reduction of approximately six spaces.

Smith commented that the proposed plan looks reasonable, and should include a minimum of approximately 40 feet for a pull out, with a spacing of a maximum of approximately 200 feet between pullouts. Laura Swan suggested a parking restriction in the middle of the 200 foot segment to the west of the Whole Foods driveway. Tycho Nightingale suggested starting with a subset of the proposed restrictions to see if the flow would change sufficiently. Aravind Basavapathruni asked about potentially adding an entrance to the Whole Foods parking lot on the west side. Amstutz noted that would be outside of the Town control.

Maxtutis stated that all parking changes would need to be approved by the Select Board. Amstutz will continue to get feedback, including from residents, and will refine the recommendation before making a formal proposal to the Select Board.

7. Update: Crosswalk on Grove Street.

Melissa Laube and Diggins provided updates on the counts. Diggins noted that the highest pedestrian volumes are between 7:45 and 8:00. In addition to the pedestrian activity, there were a lot of vehicles dropping students off in the DPW lot, and a number of cyclists entering the lot. There were also DPW vehicles coming out of the lot at that time. Diggins noted that students start looking to cross when they pass Dudley Street, and cross at the first opportunity. Diggins suggested that if the Town were to add a crosswalk, it would make most sense right around Dudley Street, to avoid left-turning vehicles. Smith suggested that it might make more sense to the south of the DPW lots, to avoid requiring pedestrians to cross both DPW entry/exits. Amstutz suggested that the Dudley Street location may make more sense because the sidewalk ends after the DPW lots. Amstutz also noted that the vehicle counts from the AHS study were high, making it hard to find a gap to cross. Diggins noted that the morning traffic was pulsed towards Mass. Ave., which does allow for some gaps.

Giroux suggested looking at this as a potential speed safety zone due to the location of Wellington Park.

Copithorne noted that DPW employees often park on Dudley St. when the DPW lot is full. Copithorne also noted that during construction, there may be increased congestion. Copithorne stated that there may be additional work on Grove St. following the DPW work, which would improve accessibility and may be a good time to add a crosswalk. Smith suggested that if there are not already curb ramps, postponing any immediate action while including it in future plans for work on Grove St.

Amstutz noted that the original request went through the Select Board, and requested a crosswalk for the high school students on Grove Street.

8. Update: One Way Signage on Victoria Road.

Amstutz stated that it can be difficult to see the Do Not Enter sign due to a privacy fence. Additional discussion was postponed to a future meeting when Corey Rateau is present.

9. Update: Crosswalk on Academy at Maple.

Maxtutis noted that you may be able to add a crosswalk, but it may not be possible to build a ramp. Additional discussion was postponed to a future meeting when Corey Rateau is present.

10. Vote: Pedestrian Flags at Bates Rd @ Raleigh St.

Maxtutis described a request to Amstutz for pedestrian flags at Bates Rd at Raleigh St. Maxtutis thought this would be an appropriate location since the crossing is long, and it's approximately one block away from Gibbs School. There are also existing sign poles to attach to the canisters. Amstutz will coordinate with the residents to get a commitment to monitor the flags. Giroux noted that the location is dark at that location. Smith will look at the lighting the next time he passes through the area.

Swan has looked at potential improvements to the flag reflectivity. One option would be to add retroreflective tape to the flags. Swan will follow up with the School Committee to potentially purchase additional flags. Basavapathruni suggested adding the retroreflective tape to the canisters themselves. He will do additional research on whether that is done anywhere else.

TAC voted to approve the installation of the pedestrian flags, contingent on a resident monitoring the flags.

11. New Work: Wellesley Rd One-Way

Maxtutis stated that Wellesley Road residents petitioned to make their street a one way during school drop off. The petition stated that the

street does not have sidewalks, which makes accommodating two way traffic dangerous.

Amstutz noted that there have been similar concerns on other local roads, so making these prohibitions could complicate the traffic flow in the area. Maxtutis and Giroux noted that similar restrictions do apply elsewhere in town.

Maxtutis formed a working group, which will consist of Smith, Swan, and Amstutz.

There being no further business, Maxtutis adjourned the meeting at 9:25 PM.